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ON THE MAGNITUDE OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM.*

NATURE may be studied in two widely different ways. On the one hand we may employ a powerful microscope which will render visible the minutest forms and limit our field of view to an infinitesimal frac-

*Part of the Address delivered before the American Association for the Advancement of Science at its Brooklyn meeting, August 16, 1894, by the retiring President, Professor Harkness, and reprinted with his permission.

tion of an inch situated within a foot of our own noses; or on the other hand, we may occupy some commanding position and from thence, aided by a telescope, we may obtain a comprehensive view of an extensive region. The first method is that of the specialist, the second is that of the philosopher, but both are necessary for an adequate understanding of nature. The one has brought us knowledge wherewith to defend ourselves against bacteria and microbes which are among the most deadly enemies of mankind, and the other has made us acquainted with the great laws of matter and force upon which rests the whole fabric of science. All nature is one, but for convenience of classification we have divided our knowledge into a number of sciences which we usually regard as quite distinct from each other. Along certain lines, or more properly, in certain regions, these sciences necessarily abut on each other, and just there lies the weakness of the specialist. He is like a wayfarer who always finds obstacles in crossing the boundaries between two countries, while to the traveler who gazes over them from a commanding eminence the case is quite different. If the boundary is an ocean shore there is no mistaking it; if a broad river or a chain of mountains it is still distinct; but if only a line of posts traced over hill and dale, then it becomes lost in the natural features of the landscape, and the essential unity of the